

this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities, including public recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States. I also call upon government officials to display the flag on all government buildings and grounds on this day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 4:36 p.m., May 1, 1995]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 1, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on May 3.

Remarks at a Kickoff Luncheon for a Women Voters Project

May 1, 1995

That may be the best introduction I ever received, and if I had really good judgment, I'd just sit down. [Laughter]

Thank you, Ellen Malcolm, Senator Mikulski, and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee, and to the Members of Congress who are out in the audience, my longtime friend Ann Richards. I met Ann Richards over 20 years ago. And I think she was living in a place called Lacy Lake View. And it was easy for me to see even then and even by Texas standards, she was a little bit larger than life. [Laughter] Humor and empathy, grit and grace, courage and decency, I respect her, and I envy her. Her jokes are always better than mine. [Laughter] And you'll all remember that she delivered one of the best political lines ever. It perfectly captured the mood of America. Do you remember? "Pass the Doritos, Mario." [Laughter] Didn't you always want to do one of those commercials? I did. [Laughter]

I'm also indebted to Ann Richards for another reason. She and Hillary went out to dinner last night, and by apparent happenstance, Julia Child was eating at the same restaurant. So the people who were running the show decided that they should have ev-

erything Julia was having, plus whatever they ordered. According to my wife, anyway, they had a 10-course, 4-hour meal—[laughter]—after which they were wheeled out on gurneys. [Laughter] The good news is, I got home from New York last night about 1:30 a.m., and it was perfectly easy to get Hillary up to talk with me. [Laughter]

I want to say a special word of appreciation to Ellen Malcolm, for her vision and her work, her phenomenal energy have played an immeasurable role in electing more women to high public office in this country than would have been conceivable before she began her important work.

I thank her for her recitation of the work that our administration has done. We have tried to involve women at an unprecedented level. I notice when I started this administration, people were, even in some of the great establishment newspapers, they were always criticizing me for trying to have a diverse administration, as if there were something wrong with it. Well, I never had any quotas, and evidence of that is, we still only have only 44 percent of my appointees are women, but that's about twice as good as anybody else ever did, and I'm proud of that.

But I have always believed we could achieve excellence with outreach and effort, without quotas, and I always thought we had kind of a stupid quota system before. It was just never stated. There were just some things that weren't women's work. Now that's a quota system, and we paid for it. And our country's better off now that we're scrapping it.

In the beginning, they used to criticize the judicial appointments process. But after 2 years, mercy, they looked up, and we'd named more judges in that time period than previous administrations and more women and minorities than the three previous Presidents, Democratic and Republican, combined. But the thing that was interesting and important to me is, we had the highest percentage of people rated well-qualified by the American Bar Association of any administration since they'd been keeping records.

So, under the leadership of Erskine Bowles, who is now my Deputy Chief of Staff, the Small Business Administration increased loans to women businesses by over

80 percent in one year. And they did it without reducing the number of loans to white males, and they did it without making a single unqualified loan.

We can do this, folks. The old system was the quota system. We need a system where everybody in America has a chance to serve and live up to the fullest of their God-given abilities.

Women's health is a terribly important issue to me. Ellen talked about it. My grandmother and my mother were working women and nurses. And this morning Hillary kicked off a new chapter in our campaign against breast cancer. The most important issue in women's health this week is the need to raise our voices in support of Dr. Henry Foster to be our Surgeon General.

He is a good man. He is a good doctor. He has spent his entire life delivering babies, bringing health care to people who wouldn't otherwise have it, training doctors to go out and help give health care to people who otherwise wouldn't have it, and spearheading a nationally televised—nationally recognized program to reduce teenage pregnancy. It received one of President Bush's Point of Light awards. Henry Foster is a pro-life, pro-choice doctor who deserves to be confirmed as Surgeon General.

Henry Foster's record should be seen in the lives of thousands of babies that he has helped come into this world in a healthy way and the people he has tried to educate and the people he has tried to help. And he deserves to be more than a political football in the emerging politics of this season.

We are on the verge of a new century and a difficult and different time when everything is changing and everything, including our politics, is somewhat unpredictable. As we look into the next century, there's a lot to be happy about, the end of the cold war, the receding of the conventional nuclear threat, the emergence of the information age, and all the exciting possibilities of the global economy. But the great challenge of this age and the great challenge I predict to you of the next 50 is that all the forces that are lifting us up and opening unlimited possibilities to our children and our grandchildren, all the forces that are driving us toward a more integrated and cooperative world have a dark un-

derside of disintegration. Because of so many of the things that are happening, we are lifting people up and seeing people beat down at the same time. There is great economic division in all the advanced countries. Why? Because more than ever before, education determines income and future prospects. So there is a great fault line in the great American middle class today which is responsible for a lot of the anxieties and a lot of the political issues and a lot of the divisiveness in our country. Those that have a good education are being lifted up; those that don't are being left behind.

More than half—more than half—of the male workers in this country are working a longer work week for a lower wage than they were making 10 years ago. That is a phenomenally important fact, not just economically but psychologically. All over America, men come home from work at night and sit down across the table with their families and know they're working as hard as they can, and they feel less secure, and they wonder if they've let their families down.

We have to do things that will change that. We have to bridge the economic divide and unleash the potential of all of our people. And the key issue there is education, constant, unrelenting dedication to excellence in education for a lifetime. It is necessary if we're going to bring this country back together.

We have these profound social divisions in our country. We have so much diversity now it is really a—it's a gold mine for us. Ann Richards took the lead in trying to get the Congress to ratify the NAFTA agreement because she knew that we had to be more closely connected with other countries in the world and that our ethnic and racial diversity is a gold mine. But when people are frightened, it's easy to focus that fright on people who look different than we do or who think differently than we do about certain things. So there is this great social division: Will our diversity become a source of unity and strength, or will it be a source of our undoing?

And then there are deeper moral divisions that I want to talk about today which are most clearly manifested in the varying attitudes in this country toward violence. And it's some-

thing we're all living with in a very personal and human way because of the way we have shared the grief and outrage of Oklahoma City.

The condition of women in all three of these areas is profoundly important. And the response of women to all of these changes is important. As Ellen said, we've made a good beginning to try to help deal with these problems, to strengthen families and support incomes with the Family and Medical Leave Act. The earned-income credit this year will give the average family of four with an income of under \$25,000 an average tax cut of \$1,000. We have set in motion a plan under the leadership of Secretary Shalala to immunize all the kids in this country under the age of 2 by 1996. Those are important things.

This Congress of the last 2 years voted virtually to fully fund the Women, Infants and Children program to make sure that child nutrition and care for pregnant women was on the front burner. We have had dramatic expansion in our education efforts, from Head Start to apprenticeships for young people who don't go to college but want good jobs, to more affordable college loans for millions of people, to the national service program which has enabled young people to serve their communities and earn money to go to college. All these things are terribly important.

We have a future economic agenda and a families agenda that involves raising the minimum wage, which I hope you will all support. Two-thirds of all the beneficiaries of an increase in the minimum wage will be working women—working women.

There was a remarkable show on one of our television stations up here the other night, a news program on a little town south of here that had a lot of minimum wage workers. And they went and interviewed a woman working in a factory. And the news reporter said, "Now, you know, your employer says that if the minimum wage goes up that they'll either have to put more money in machines or they'll lose business. In any case, you might lose your job if the minimum wage is raised." And she looked at him and said, "Honey, I'll take my chances"—[*laughter*—which I thought was the best one-line

response I've seen on the news in a long time. If we don't raise the minimum wage next year it will be at a 40-year low. That is not my idea of what America should look like as we move into the global economy.

We ought to have welfare reform, but it ought to be the right kind of welfare reform. We shouldn't be punishing people for mistakes in the past. We should be giving them opportunity and imposing responsibility as they move into the future so people can succeed as successful workers and successful parents. It ought to be a work-based, parent-based strong program that lifts people up, not puts them down, basically just as a guise to save money. That is very important. You should be involved in the welfare reform effort.

And we should continue to invest more in education, not less. I say to the Congress over and over, we have two deficits, not one. Yeah, we've got a budget deficit, but we've also got an education deficit, and if we try to solve the budget deficit at the expense of the education deficit, we will be cutting off our nose to spite our face because we will lower the incomes of America and their capacity to pay taxes. So there are things we can do to deal with the economic divide where the fault line is education. And we are working to do things that will bring us together and to lessen these social tensions by lifting up everybody in their work and in their family life.

But we have to say that America has special problems which we have all begun to think more about because of the heartbreak of Oklahoma City, and that is violence. It has many forms. We live with it in our streets and our schools and our homes, where we work, where we live, where we play. Yes, we see it visibly if there is an action against a clinic where legal abortions are performed. But we also see it in some of our churches and synagogues. I never will forget being in Brooklyn one day with Congressman Schumer and driving by a synagogue with a big swastika on it—in the United States in 1992.

We also see it, unfortunately, in our families. Violence can do a lot of damage in a country and it certainly has here. In Oklahoma City, we suffered a terrible wound because it was an act of terrorism. And as we mourn the dead and heal the injured, console

the grieving and begin the rebuilding, we must also spare no effort to bring to justice those responsible. We must also understand that even punishing the guilty will not be enough if we cannot protect the innocent and the future. So I say to you my fellow Americans: I take a back seat to no one in my devotion to the Constitution. But we can protect the Constitution and our freedom and be tougher on terrorism in America, and we must.

I have sent to Congress a large number of suggestions that will strengthen our hand in dealing with this issue. And again, I urged them to act on it and act on it without delay. The stories you do not read in the newspaper are those that are most important—the bombs that don't go off, the schemes that are thwarted before they succeed—and we must be better and better and better at that. Whether terrorism is hatched abroad or within our borders, we must be better.

But we must also stand up against those who say that somehow this is all right, this is somehow a political act, people who say, I love my country, but I hate my Government. These people, who do they think they are, saying that their Government has stamped out human freedom?

Do you think—[*applause*—I don't know if there's another country in the world that would, by law, protect the right of a lot of these groups to say what they want to say to each other over the short-wave radio or however else they want to say it, to assemble over the weekend and do whatever they want to do, and to bear arms, which today means more than the right to keep and bear arms, it may mean the right to keep and bear an arsenal of artillery. Is there a—who are they to say they have no freedom in this country? Other countries do not permit that.

I plead with you—do not lose your concentration on this issue. This is a big issue. Remember what I said earlier: The forces that are lifting up the world have a dark underside. What makes the global society work? What makes the information age work? Openness. Free movement. Low barriers to the transfer of people, ideas, and information. What does that mean? You can have a terrorist network on the Internet exchanging information about building bombs. What

does that mean? You can build a bomb in one State and get in your truck and drive somewhere else freely and without being interrupted. What does it mean? It's easier to get into the country than other countries where you want to make mischief.

The open society is at more risk to the forces of organized evil. Don't forget about the people in Oklahoma City. Don't forget about their families. Don't forget about what they need to rebuild, and don't forget about what we need to try to prevent future incidents of this kind. Do not lose your interest in this issue as it fades into the past. We have a lot of work to do.

Let me also say that I hope that this incident will focus us a little more on the general problem of the extraordinary level of violence in our society, to find its common roots as well as to understand the differences in the different kinds of violence we have. I have to say this, and maybe it's an old-fashioned view, but I believe that it is innate in human nature that there is the capacity to do wrong and to harm others. And we are all balanced in different ways, subject to different forces. There are always excuses or reasons that can be given. I'm sorry for whatever terrible thing happened to the suspect in the Oklahoma City bombing case, but we have to stop making excuses and start thinking about what we can do to build a responsible, nonviolent society.

There is a lot of good news out there. I was in New York yesterday, where the crime rate has been going down for several years and where this year the murder rate is so far—knock on wood—more than a third below what it was last year. And this is happening all over the country. But violent crime is much higher today than it was a generation ago. There's been rising incidence of sexual assaults, muggings, homicides, some of it caused by street gangs, which themselves systematically terrorize law-abiding citizens in their area of operation, first in our inner cities and now spreading more and more to suburbs and to small towns.

Increasingly, the victims of crime and the culprits alike are young people, even children. Today, believe it or not, there are thousands of children who stay home from school every day in America because they're afraid

that violence will await them there. And even more children go, and learn about fear in their classrooms and hallways.

Sometimes the sole motivation for crime is hate or racial prejudice or extreme ideology. We've seen people killed and others wounded only because they were working at clinics. In the last decades we've been forced to acknowledge the full extent of reality about which we had long remained in denial which may not be able to be explained in terms of hate, racial prejudice, or extremist ideology, and that is the epidemic violence visited on women and children, often in the home.

I have known about this problem for a long time. I understand how it rips up family. Hillary and I were regular visitors at a shelter for battered women and their children when we lived at home. I have talked with abused children. I know that this problem of domestic violence is a difficult one. We have begun to be aggressive with it. America must be aggressive with it.

We see how much of crime among our young people is still due to drugs. And it's shocking to me that, for reasons that are not entirely understandable, as the economy has gotten better but some places have been left behind, casual drug use among some of our young people is going up again. This is a bad thing. We must speak against it. It will lead to more violence.

If you look at the profile of every penitentiary in the country, every Governor in America, including Ann Richards and Bill Clinton, every Governor in the country in the last 15 years has given speech after speech after speech about how tough we were on crime and how many prison cells we've built. If you go behind those bars you'll see them just full of people who basically had two problems. They had no education, and they were either addicted to drugs or alcohol. And so we continue to pay the price in violence and wrecked lives.

All of you have cared a great deal about making democracy work for all Americans. And you've done a good thing. And when we change our economic policy, when we broaden the doors of opportunities for people and permit more women and others who have been traditionally denied a chance to

live up to their fullest capacities a chance to do it, we're all better off, and we're all strengthened. But when this country has the plague of violence we endure in so many ways, we are all weakened.

The most tragic thing outside the human loss in Oklahoma City itself to me was seeing the absolute terror that inflicted the lives of millions of American children who felt vulnerable, who felt that they somehow no longer understood what the rules were, didn't know if their parents could protect them, didn't know if right and wrong would reign in America.

So I say to you, we need to take a serious look at this whole issue of violence. We tried to address it in the crime bill last year with more police on the street because we know that that prevents crime, with the assault weapons ban and the Brady bill, with stronger sentences and prevention programs for our young people, and programs for drug education and prevention and treatment.

We also understand that poverty breeds crime. That's why I worked so hard on the earned-income tax credit, to say that if you do work you shouldn't be still in poverty. We ought to reward work. The real heroes in this country today are people who are being pounded by this global economy, who are living in neighborhoods that are difficult, and still get up every day and go to work and raise their children the best they can, obey the law, pay their taxes, and try to make things work. They deserve economic policies and security policies that give them a chance to be honored for their work.

I do want to say again, though, we have to try to look deeper at the cause of the violence. Ellen mentioned that I recently appointed Bonnie Campbell, of Iowa, to direct our Office of Violence Against Women. And one of her most important jobs will be simply to educate the American people about the scope of this problem and what should be done and how to root it out. But our goal must be not just to punish people who do this but to stop it from happening in the first place, to change the spirit and the culture of America.

Yesterday—or, excuse me, late last week, I met with Eileen Adams, another distinguished appointee at the Justice Depart-

ment, who runs our Office of Victims Rights. And we honored people who spend all their time working with victims of crime. I met mothers who'd lost their children. I met a woman who had been victimized by a repeat sex offender who was released on parole, who molested her, poured gasoline over her body, set her afire, and left her to die. And this young girl, having literally had her body burned beyond recognition, and her brave mother have worked for more than a decade, after this child was maimed and blinded and burned almost beyond recognition, to put her life back together physically and spiritually. And now the mother and the daughter spend all their time trying to help victims of crime.

We must address what is causing the United States to commit the whole range of violence that we see. And none of us can escape our responsibility. We have to say: What do we expect from individuals? And we're not going to tolerate the defense that somebody else made me do it. What will families have to do? What will community organizations have to do? What must the churches do? What must the Government do? Where have we been wrong? What must the media do? And what must the culture do, the influence centers in our culture, the entertainment industry, the sports industry?

There have now been—the Vice President told me this morning before I left to come over here, there have now been 3,000 studies on the relationship between violent behavior and exposure to violence through entertainment in ways that desensitize people to it, and they all show that there is a connection.

Now, that doesn't mean that we should have all movies and books without violence. This is a violent country. It's a part of real life. It doesn't mean they can't be exciting, but it does mean when we desensitize and deaden people to the reality of violence, we cannot be surprised when our children, who do not know right from wrong and are not as well developed as those of us who are older, have a desensitized reaction to their own conduct. So we must all say: What is our responsibility? We must all accept the fact that our words do have consequences. We must accept that.

We must ask, without pointing the finger of blame necessarily, we say—do you say

things or do things that either reinforce violent behavior, encourage violent behavior, act as if at least it doesn't matter to you, or numb people to what it's really like? And what could we do to deal with this in a comprehensive way? We don't need to make this a political issue. We must not make it a partisan issue. But neither can anybody run and hide under the sheet and say, well, I didn't do this, that, or the other thing; therefore, what I did do was fine.

This horrible thing that has happened to us in Oklahoma at least imposes on us a responsibility to all examine the roots of violence in this country. We need not be more violent than other countries. We need not abuse our freedom so cavalierly. We need not snuff out more lives. But above all, if we do this, we can't be selective. We can't condemn one act of violence and condone another. That would be like trying to put out a fire by just watering one room and leaving the others to burn.

For too long, people, I think, have taken the easy way out and blamed violence only on the environment in which a person grows up. Well, that's, doubtless, true. But if that's true, why do most people who grow up in horrible environments turn out to be law-abiding citizens? Why do some people succeed against all the odds? Other people, because it lets them off the hook, just want to blame the individual and ignore the root causes. Well, if that's true, why are some groups of people so much more law abiding than others and so much less violent than others? We've got to set aside our preconceptions and our ideological baggage. And I say again, we don't need partisanship here; we need to look at violence with new and fresh eyes.

My administration has worked to make our country safer. It's worked to give more people the liberation of education. It's worked to make the economy stronger. And we can do more on all these fronts. But the thing that is driving violence in America is deeper than that, deeper than all these things.

So I ask you to work on this, to work on this with me. Yes, continue your passion for the cause of violence against women and children. Yes, continue your passion for the proposition that people who only perform le-

gally under the law should not have their places of business bombed.

But be concerned about the political violence that makes people believe that they can literally claim to be political prisoners when they murder innocent children. And be concerned about the violence that grows out of our total insensitivity to the welfare of all these children who are growing up on the meanest streets in America. Be concerned about the violence that may at least be legitimized by the cultural forces and the daily words that all of us endure and sometimes enjoy.

We all have a role in this. This is a big issue. It will not be solved overnight. But it will be hard enough—I will tell you again—it will be hard enough for us to combat the forces of disintegration and organized evil into the 21st century if we are at our best. If we are at our best, it will be hard enough. If we continue to be insensitive to the role all the forces in our society play to the environment in which we operate, it may be a battle we can't win.

I honestly believe that the years ahead of us will be the most exciting, most productive, most rewarding years in all of human history, especially for people who historically have not been able to live up to the fullest of their capacity. But to do that, we must—we must—root out this scourge of darkness within our country, and we can do it.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:02 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Washington Hilton at the 10th anniversary celebration of EMILY's List. In his remarks, he referred to Ellen Malcolm, founder and president, EMILY's List, and former Texas Governor Ann Richards.

Remarks to "I Have A Future" Program Participants

May 1, 1995

Dr. Foster, Dr. Peters, Jason and LaShonda, the "I Have A Future" teens and parents and the national community leaders that are here. I have received, in this room named for Presidents Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, Kings and Queens, Prime Ministers and Presidents, Senators and Congress-

men and Governors, Nobel Prize-winning scientists, world-famous citizens. I have never been prouder to receive people in this room than I am to have you here today. LaShonda and Jason have said everything that needs to be said about this, about Henry Foster and about the "I Have A Future" program.

For a very long time, I have been concerned about how many of our young people we are losing because of teen pregnancy or drugs or violence or just giving up on school. This program, which combats teen pregnancy through abstinence and hope, which keeps people in school and off drugs and away from violence, is what America ought to be about. We have people here every day, making speeches about all this. You have actually done something about it. We have people here every day, rushing to define people that they're opposed to in little cardboard cut-out terms, so that it will fit in 15 or 20 seconds that shoots across the airways at night on the evening news.

Now you know, because you know Dr. Foster, how easy it is to make something big little, something little big, something straight twisted, something good look wrong.

Henry Foster has been a teacher and a doctor. He has done everything he could to promote life's best values. He has spent a lifetime addressing the problems that are now engulfing our country. If we can't save you kids, we can't save America. If we can't convince you that violence is wrong, that drugs are wrong, that teen pregnancy is wrong, that you've got to live for yourself and make the most of your life, we can't save America.

Most folks get so cynical and skeptical, they think nothing good can happen. Well, here it is, something good happening, something wonderful happening, something that is changing lives and it is bringing people together, something that there is no partisan politics in, something that is just good, rooted in old-fashioned, good, decent American values.

Everybody that looks at it has reached the same conclusion. My predecessor, President Bush, honored the success of this program by naming it one of the 1,000 Points of Light. President Bush's Secretary of Health and